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snug little farms scattered over it, extends to the sea, while on the east, black and impenetrable forests clothe the lofty mountains, affording a good idea of the difficulty, danger, and labour it must have cost to expel the savages from their mountain fastnesses.

3. *A Trip to Kalgan in the Autumn of 1868.* By R. SWINHOE,
H.B.M. Consul, Amoy.

(Communicated by the FOREIGN OFFICE.)

"SIR,

"Takow, Formosa, Jan. 18, 1869.

"On the pleasure trip to Kalgan I made in company with Messrs. Ford and Carles, Student Interpreters, towards the end of September last, before leaving Pekin, I took some notes, which may be of importance in connexion with my present mission, on inland residence and navigation.

"The route we took was through the Tihshing Gate past Tsingho, Shaho, and Changping-Chow to Nankow, a village at the foot of the pass. The road through the pass is so fearfully bad that we were obliged to send our carts, though empty, each in charge of an extra man, and our baggage on donkeys. The pass is about 13 miles long, winding through the hills until the gate of the Great Wall is reached, issuing from which another rough couple of miles brings you to Shato, a small walled village, consisting mainly of inns, and supported by the passenger-traffic of the pass. Donkeys and mules are procurable at Shato, as at Nankow, to help passengers through the terrible pass. Along the pass one notes the remains of a paved way in places; but the greater part of it has long since worn away, and the stones have been forced right and left, leaving a very rough and irregular road, unfit for any wheeled conveyance, and I doubt if any but the strong springless Pekin carts could endure without destruction the jolts and tumbles as they are half-carried half-dragged over the big stones that lie about. A mule-litter is doubtless the easiest, quickest and safest mode of conveyance over the stony region which is traversed on the way to Kalgan. The Keu-yung-kwan, or walled barrier, that is gone through in the pass, is of some interest for the fine old arch that spans the road through it. The inside of this archway, besides the figures in bas-relief it bears, is inscribed with a Sanscrit prayer, represented phonetically in four modes of writing, viz., Sanscrit, Chinese, the Newchi character, and the Paszepa. The Newchi inscription is the only inscription of that quaint character now accessible to students. This character was invented by a scholar under the order of Taetsoo, the first Emperor of the Kin dynasty during the twelfth century. The Newchi were a tribe of Tartars from the mountain-wilds north-east of China, who ruled in China as the Kin dynasty (see Article VIII., by Mr. Wylie, in 'Transactions of China Branch of Asiatic Society, Hongkong,' Part vii., p. 137, 1859). The Paszepa was an alphabet invented by Pashpa, the first of the hierarchy of Dalai Lamas in the Yuen dynasty. A specimen of this writing also occurs in a temple at Shanghae (see Mr. Wylie, Art. III., 'Transactions of the China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hongkong,' Part v., 1855). At the first gate of the Keu-yung-kwan there is a barrier for the collection of duties. Inside the further gate the Yamèn of the Military Commandant (Toosze) is situated. A wall runs up the hill on each side of the first gate and descends to meet the further gate, thus encircling the barrier town. The Great Wall at the head of the pass is in tolerable condition, and evidently more modern than the wall at Kalgan. Its gate is in ruins and deserted. The country about and beyond Shato is barren and bare, with little cultivation (chiefly of sorghum), and the roads rough and stony as far as Yulin. As you approach Hwailai Hsien, 50 li from Shato, these improve, a small river runs past this town, by the side of which we saw a large herd of camels laden with teas for Russia. The road takes you over

a good stone bridge through the town, which is poor and dilapidated, but surrounded by an imposing wall. Indeed, almost every village on this route has a high wall, either of brick or mud, encircling it. The market was well stocked with fruit and vegetables. Fifty li onwards brings the traveller to Shaching, passing on the road Too-muh-pao, a village with a high mud wall crenellated along the top with brick. Shaching, or more properly Shanching (three cities), is so called from the fact of its consisting of three walled enclosures lying contiguous. It is under the jurisdiction of the Hwai lai Hsien, and controlled by a Seun Keen residing in the central enclosure. It is a somewhat flourishing place, and contains certainly the best inns I have met with in North China. Pao an Hien, a walled town of no great pretensions, is passed after 20 li, and 20 li further brings us to the walled town of Kemeih, which affords in its outward suburb two very tolerable inns. The Wenho (river) appears on the left, winding southwards, and the plain shows more cultivation. To the north-east of Kemeih stands an imposing hill, with a temple on the top of it. Coal outcrops on the sides of the hill, and we noticed several deserted mines; some, however, are still worked, and the fuel taken to Seuenhwafoo and Kalgan. The hills on the left side now approach the coal-hill range, and form a gorge for the Wenho to pass through, the road passing on the right, cut in many places through the hard rock and very rough. Leaving the gorge, an undulating country is crossed till Heang-shuy-poo is reached, 70 li from Shaching; 30 more li, some of them over very rough hilly road, brings us to Seuenhwafoo, the capital of the whole country between Shato and Kalgan. Here we met Mongols with large herds of horses and camels carrying in big blocks of paichien, or white lead, from Mongolia. This city was large and walled, but we saw it under unfavourable circumstances; the rain had fallen so heavily that the streets were all under water. A Roman Catholic Mission is established here, and is apparently in a flourishing state. Sixty li more brought us to Kalgan or Chang-chia-kow. The total distance from Peking to Kalgan is about 120 miles. Kalgan consists of two towns, the Hiapoo and the Shangpoo. In the Hiapoo is the walled town of Wantseuen Hien, approached by a good modern bridge, the Tungkéao. The road leads past the town to the Shangfoo, about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile distant, at the end of the busy main street of which in a short pass is the gate, and up the hills on either side run the ruined remains of the old Great Wall. Wantseuen Hien, with its mosques and minarets, has a very Oriental appearance. Its main streets were crowded, as were those of the Shangpoo, and there seemed to be much traffic. Two American missionary families reside in the Shangpoo or Upper Kalgan, but no Roman Catholics are established there yet. Snow lay on the hill-range on the left, and it felt cold: yet apples, grapes, and other fruits and vegetables, continued in abundance; and on our journey to and fro we constantly met large droves of donkeys and mules loaded with baskets of fresh fruit on their way to the nearest market. Our innkeeper conducted us through the gate to the stony gully which is divided by a hill-range; the road to Mongolia, such as it is, passing on both sides. The plain at the head of the gully was said to be 100 li distant. On the left side of the right-hand road stands a Confucian temple, well carved and painted, most of the pictures representing foreign life and foreigners making presents to Chinese grandees. The foreigners in these pictures were, of course, Russians; they know of no other kweitsz (or imps) in Kalgan.

“Russian cloth is the only broadcloth found in the shops at Kalgan and Seuenhwafoo. Drills and opium are brought from Tien-tsin, and represent our trade in these markets. Camels loaded with tea-chests, carrying little white flags marked with Russian letters and Chinese characters, were passing through Kalgan in large numbers. The Russians have an establishment about a mile beyond the gate, at which six Russians reside. One of them keeps an hotel for the accommodation of European travellers. One-fifth of the merchandise

imported *viâ* Kiachta, consisting mainly of cloth and raw leather, the Russian merchants are allowed to detain for disposal at Kalgan, which appears to be a large centre of distribution. The duties on this portion are collected at Kalgan. The remaining four-fifths of the goods pass on to Tien-tsin, and pay there. When the goods are once sold at Kalgan they cannot be repurchased, as no trade is sanctioned there. On one occasion, however, this was managed privately in the case of leather; and an endeavour was made to break through the rule generally, but without success. The chief export trade to Russia is of course, tea. Russian tea-tasters are said to reside on the tea-hills near Hankow, and to make their own selections from the teas there grown. The tea they purchase is packed and sent by steam to Shanghai, whence it is forwarded, also by steam, to Tien-tsin, where every chest is certificated by the Russian Consul. The Russian tea is the largest item of freight that the steamers carry from Shanghai to Tien-tsin. From Tien-tsin the tea is forwarded to Tungchow in barges, where the resident Russian merchants pack it on the backs of camels, and send it on by direct route (without passing through Peking) to Kalgan. The resident Russians at the last-named place thence pass it on to Kiachta across the Mongolian desert.

"It will thus appear that the Russian merchants reside and do some sort of business at these places, where we have not asserted our claim to reside. They work in companies, and by means of their own Russian interpreters; their business seems to progress without ruffle or disturbance. We might, perhaps, with advantage claim the same privileges for our merchants; though, from what we learn from the failures at Tient-sin in the competition with the Chinese merchants, there is no reason to hope that our people would be more successful at Tungchow and Kalgan than they have been at Tient-sin. The Russians have the transport business, which is their great standing, failing all other trade. Our trade would simply be general, and would have to struggle against Chinese competition; and, as the expenses of Chinese establishments and of Chinese mode of transport must inevitably be less than those of our people, the British merchant would gain little advantage by such privilege to trade. The right of residence in the Hankow tea-hills, I must leave till I visit that neighbourhood.

"Mr. Mongan, Her Majesty's Consul at Tien-tsin, in his report on inland residence and navigation, writes with regard to Kalgan or Chang-chia Kôw: 'Were British subjects allowed to reside at Chang-chia Kôw, the pass by which the trade from Tien-tsin flows into Western Mongolia, and finds its way to the great marts of Lama miao and Kwei-hwa-ching, they might teach the Mongolians how to improve their breed of sheep and prepare the wool for exportation with a result that would benefit both teachers and pupils, and tend to increase, in no small degree, the value of the export trade from Tien-tsin.'"

4. *On the Failure of Earthquake Predictions in Peru.* By the HON. W. G. S. JERNINGHAM, Chargé d'affaires at Peru.

(Communicated by the FOREIGN OFFICE.)

"MY LORD,

"British Legation, Lima, 12th October, 1869.

"The great apprehensions which, it would appear, the inhabitants of South America, from Panama even to Ancud in Chili, have been labouring under, that earthquakes were to happen in these regions of the earth on the 30th of September or 1st of October, in consequence of a belief in the theory of a German astronomer, M. Falb, who, in a pamphlet which was translated into Spanish and published, called the attention of the inhabitants of those countries which are the most exposed to earthquakes, viz., equatorial regions,